



**For Immediate Release
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Rep Spiros Op-Ed: Sanctuary Cities

There is a bill before the legislature, Assembly Bill 190, that will make your community safer and for that reason alone, it should be taken up. This legislation, which I authored, calls for cooperation between Wisconsin municipalities and federal law enforcement agencies by requiring that municipalities comply with federal law and U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detainers. Due to confusion and misinformation that has been spread about this legislation, I want to clarify what this bill does and doesn't do. First I will begin with why I think it should be law in Wisconsin

You may remember a tragedy that happened July 1, 2015 when Kathryn Steinle was shot and killed as she was walking on a San Francisco pier with her father. The shooter was Francisco Sanchez, an illegal immigrant and convicted felon who had been previously deported five times. When tragedy strikes a community, people often speculate if it could have been prevented. In this case, we know it could have. Despite the fact that Sanchez had served three prison terms and was wanted on an outstanding drug charge, the San Francisco district attorney declined to prosecute the case and because it is a sanctuary city, the city of San Francisco chose not to comply with a detainer that had been issued by ICE.

Sanctuary cities are knowingly putting the lives of their citizens at risk. Steps must be taken to ensure this is not allowed in Wisconsin. I don't want to let a Kathryn Steinle tragedy happen here like it did in San Francisco.

This bill does not target immigrants, whether documented or undocumented. We want those living in our communities to feel safe, so it is important to note that those who are the victim of a crime or witness to a crime can still feel comfortable reaching out to authorities without fear of being turned over to federal immigration officials. This bill would by no means encourage members of law enforcement agencies to inquire about the immigration status of anyone they come in contact with, nor would it empower them to proactively initiate any kind of immigration investigation. Rather than potentially affect any immigrant who has come in contact with law enforcement, the limited scope of the bill is in an effort to only impact those individuals who pose a legitimate public safety risk to our state.

JOHN SPIROS

State Representative • 86th Assembly District

ICE has a proven track record of prioritizing those individuals who pose a legitimate public safety risk, meaning unless an individual has committed a serious crime, they have no reason to believe that this legislation will impact them.

In the time since I formally introduced Assembly Bill 190, I have been disappointed in the amount of deliberate misinformation that has been spread. The Milwaukee-based organization Voces de la Frontera and their executive director Christine Neumann-Ortiz have continued to share false information about the bill for the purpose of inciting fear within the community. Rather than focusing on what we can do to make our communities safer, which this bill would do, the organization is focusing on fear mongering and further driving a wedge between law enforcement and the immigrant population.

When drafting this bill, I was diligent about reaching out to individuals and organizations across the state. Voces de la Frontera was invited to be a part of that conversation. They received a copy of the bill before it was introduced and were asked what improvements could be made, and unfortunately, they chose not to participate in the discussion. I have always had an open-door policy and have welcomed feedback from anyone with concerns about the bill.

Ultimately, my goal with this bill is to make sure those living in our state feel as safe as possible.

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